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ABSTRACT

Asia now claims more than half of the world's population and economically presents a challenge to the former western domination of the world's markets. With these changes, education for international understanding is essential. How can the classroom become the site for effective and balanced instruction about Asia? This document presents numerous classroom approaches for teaching about Asia in a non-fragmented way. A multidisciplinary approach is suggested, employing art, history, current events, music, literature, religion, foods, and using the school as a cultural broker, rather than simply introducing courses labeled Asian history. Teaching students to question and challenge stereotypes, and to evaluate and compare Asian systems against their own will lead to global understanding and a lessening of racism. Sections on teaching materials, learning resources, and how to incorporate teaching about Asia in the existing curriculum are included. (NL)

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The CDCC's Teacher Bursaries Scheme

Asia in the European classroom

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COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL CO-OPERATION
School Education Division

Strasbourg
1986

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CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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The CDCC's Teacher Bursaries Scheme

Asia in the European classroom

by
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Strasbourg
1986

The opinions expressed in this study are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of the Council for Cultural Co-operation of the Council of Europe.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
1.	PREFACE by Maitland STOBART, Deputy Director of Education, Culture and Sport, Council of Europe	1
2.	WHY STUDY ASIA ?	4
3.	EUROPEAN PERCEPTIONS OF ASIA	11
4.	THE PRESENT PLACE OF ASIA IN EUROPE'S SECONDARY SCHOOLS	18
5.	PROBLEMS AND CONSTRAINTS	22
6.	CLASSROOM APPROACHES TO ASIA	28
7.	TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS	40
8.	ASIA AND THE "AGE OF DISCOVERY"	44
	REFERENCES	49

1. PREFACE

Education for international understanding has been one of the Council of Europe's main priorities since the Organisation was set up in 1949. With the help of governmental experts, teachers, textbook authors and non-governmental organisations, the Council has sought to clarify how schools can extend their pupils' horizons and promote respect for, and solidarity with peoples of other countries and cultures. As the Council's Committee of Ministers recommended in 1983, schools "should encourage all young Europeans to see themselves not only as citizens of their own regions and countries, but also as citizens of Europe and of the wider world".

The first phase of the Council of Europe's work on education for international understanding was devoted to improving communication and understanding among Europeans, in particular through:

- a more effective learning of modern languages;
- a fair and balanced teaching of history and geography.

More recently, the Council has studied how to give a European Dimension to the whole of the school curriculum, and in 1983 the Organisation's Committee of Ministers adopted a recommendation on "The promotion of an awareness of Europe in secondary schools". This text suggests that teaching about Europe should give pupils a full understanding of such key concepts as:

- democracy, human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- tolerance and pluralism;
- interdependence and co-operation;
- human and cultural unity and diversity;
- conflict and change.

At present the Council is now studying how to give a European Dimension to the primary school curriculum.

Education for an inter-dependent world

In 1978 the Council of Europe began a new phase in its work on education for international understanding when it started to study:

- teaching about North/South issues and problems of global development (development education);

- the way in which other parts of the world are taught in secondary schools in Western Europe.

The work on development education was a response by the Council of Europe's Council for Cultural Co-operation (the CDCC) to the concern expressed by the Organisation's Parliamentary Assembly about the lack of support in Europe for North/South co-operation. Since 1979, the CDCC has organised, usually in co-operation with UNICEF, five European Teachers' Seminars on development education in primary and secondary schools.

The Council of Europe's Second Medium-Term Plan (1981-1986) stresses the importance of facilitating and strengthening "possibilities of dialogue and mutual understanding with other parts of the world", and this objective has led the CDCC to examine, at a second series of teachers' seminars, how these "other parts of the world" are presented in secondary schools in Western Europe. By the Spring of 1986, the CDCC will have held teachers' seminars on Africa south of the Sahara, Asia, Brazil, Canada (two), China, Japan, Spanish-speaking Latin America, and the USA (two). As a follow-up to the Seminar on Japan, the International Society for Educational Information in Tokyo invited a group of influential European educators to take part in a three week study-tour of Japan in 1983.

Furthermore, the interaction between Europe and non-European cultures was studied at two teachers' seminars in Portugal in 1983 and 1984. These seminars dealt with the Portuguese Voyages of Expansion and were linked to the 17th Council of Europe Art Exhibition which was held in Lisbon in 1983. Its theme was "The Portuguese Discoveries and Renaissance Europe". The first seminar pointed out that "in the past, the European Discoveries were often taught in a chauvinistic or eurocentric way". The Seminar recommended that, "in view of the multi-cultural character of many schools in Western Europe and of the need to educate young people for life in an inter-dependent world, it is essential that teaching about this topic should not lead to feelings of racial or cultural superiority".

The three series of seminars have aroused considerable interest both in Western Europe and elsewhere, and the seminar reports have been used extensively at national in-service training courses for teachers.

The findings of the seminars will be submitted to an intergovernmental symposium to be held in Finland from 1-5 September 1986. The symposium, which will be attended by delegates from the 24 States that take part in the CDCC's work, will analyse these findings and make practical proposals on how schools in Western Europe can help to prepare young people for life in an interdependent world.

The symposium will also be a contribution by the CDCC to the European Public Campaign on North/South Interdependence that will be launched in 1987 by the Council of Europe and the Commission of the European Communities.

Teaching about Asia

The second of the CDCC's teachers' seminars on how other parts of the world are presented in secondary schools in Western Europe was devoted to Asia. The seminar was held in London in 1982, and it was organised in co-operation with the Department of Extramural Studies of the London University School of Oriental and African Studies. The Council of Europe would like to express its deepest gratitude to the School of Oriental and African Studies for its generous help and support in organising the London Seminar.

The present study on "Asia in the European classroom" is based on the ideas put forward at the London Seminar, but it also takes account of the conclusions of the two seminars on the Portuguese Voyages that were held in Lisbon and Evora in 1983 and 1984.

Maitland STOBART

Deputy Director of Education, Culture and Sport
Council of Europe

2. WHY STUDY ASIA?

Why should young people in secondary schools in Western Europe study about Asia? The most obvious answer might be - to quote the mountaineer - "because it's there". The potential climber could, of course, simply ignore the majestic peaks towering in the distance. Perhaps the real question is can European schools ignore Asia - the home of over half the world's population, a continent with long historical ties with Europe, a place which, if it is defined to include the Middle East (as it is in this discussion), includes the military might of China, the economic power of Japan and the oil resources of the Gulf. Asia is also an area with which Europe has extensive trade links, and one whose future is tied to that of Western Europe in an era of economic interdependence.

Furthermore, Asia is the birthplace of all of the world's great religions and an area whose cultural achievements offer enrichment to all our lives. Last but not least, Asia is, in a sense, present in Europe in our neighbours who come from (or whose parents and grandparents came from) China, Indonesia, Vietnam, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Japan, Lebanon and numerous other Asian countries.

The question "Why study about Asia?" might best be answered on three levels:

(i) the importance of Asia. Young people should study about Asia because it was an important part of the world in the past and continues to be so today. To leave school with an ignorance of this part of the world would be a disadvantage;

(ii) fostering harmony in a multi-cultural society. All pupils in a multi-cultural society which includes an Asian minority should study about Asia so that bridges of communication can be built between the various groups that make up that society. Studying about Asia at school helps young people of Asian origin to develop pride in their own culture and fosters respect for Asian culture and customs in the community as a whole;

(iii) the goal of individual development. Pupils should study about Asia so that they will have the opportunity to explore different ways of thinking and creating. An introduction to Asian thought and life and to the great achievements of the East will help all students to broaden their horizons and to become better and wiser human beings.

This chapter explores each of these three reasons.

The importance of Asia

Asia has been an important part of the world for a very long time. Its great civilisations have ranged from Mesopotamia, Assyria and Babylonia in the Middle East to the great empires of India, China and Japan. The achievements of these civilisations offer rich rewards for the student of Asian history. It is not, perhaps, possible to learn in detail about all of them, but an in-depth study of even one or two presents a rich array of material. We are able to see how civilisations in the East faced the same problems as those in the West, but sometimes solved them in fascinatingly different ways. We are able to appreciate the great contributions which the East has made to world civilisation. In short, we are able to view the richness of human thought and life.

Looking at the links that these civilisations had with the West also provides interesting insights. To study Eastern civilisations only in terms of their importance to the West is, of course, a less than satisfactory approach. Such Eurocentric thinking has led to Asian societies being introduced in the European classroom only when they were "cradles of civilisation", when they were "discovered", when they were "colonised", and when they are labeled "the Third World". Obviously, this approach misses out some of the best parts. The times when Asian civilisations reached their peaks, when they made marvellous contributions in art, science and government, tend to be left out, and this creates by omission an inaccurate picture of Asian history.

However, looking at historical links can be a valuable exercise even though it is not the only approach to Asia. One of the first important discoveries to be made is that relationships between the East and West have had a different character in different times.

The Classical Age was a time of trade, war and generally close ties. It is a particularly interesting period since it offers a view of the Western world open to both the culture and goods of the East. The Greeks knew the Persians only too well as strong adversaries, but Greek interest in Asia went beyond "knowing the enemy". Plato's writings show that he was familiar with the philosophical systems of the East, and the works of Indian astronomers indicate a knowledge of Greek achievements. Alexander the Great sought not only to know about Asia but to rule it when he arrived in India with his armies in 327 BC. The generals whom he left behind maintained ties with the West, and trade flourished.

The extent of Roman trade with Asia is clear in Pliny's warning that the treasuries of Rome were being drained of gold in the excessive purchase of luxuries from the East. These included silks from China as well as perfumes and spices from India, and the fine Indian cottons from which the "best" Roman togas were made. A lovely ivory mirror handle carved in India and found in the ruins of Herculaneum is a testament to one Roman's taste in luxuries; and the hoardes of Roman gold coins

found in India give credence to Pliny's warning. The fall of the Roman Empire forced a major reorientation in India's trade patterns. When their Western source of gold vanished, Indian traders turned to the East, strengthening trade and cultural ties with Southeast Asia and China. Some of Asia's greatest civilisations were thriving when Europe with the decline of Rome experienced a period of decadence, chaos and confusion.

During the Middle Ages, European interest in philosophical and other ideas from India and China seems to have evaporated. Relations with Asia in these "dark ages" were marked mainly by conflict in the form of the Crusades, fought in the name of religious differences. Even this very negative form of contact had its positive benefits, ranging from the introduction of new crops in Europe to the preservation of Greek learning through translations in Arabic manuscripts. There was, of course, an economic dimension as well. Trade routes to the East were a main bone of contention, and spices from Asia remained a much sought after commodity. The scars inflicted by these religious wars ran so deeply that, to this day, the era is rarely viewed without bias either in the European classroom or outside it. Researchers and others searching for examples of ethnocentric and biased material in European textbooks have little difficulty in finding what they are looking for in standard accounts of the Crusades.

The quest for trade routes to the East ushered in the next important era - the so-called "Age of Discovery". On arriving on India's Malabar coast in 1498, Vasco da Gama is said to have announced that he came in search of Christians and spices. The Christians whom he sought were the lost Christian tribes that held great fascination for the European imagination. The Christians whom he found were the St. Thomas Christians, who trace their origins back to the disciple Thomas, who is said to have travelled to India and established the Church there.

The spice at the top of da Gama's list was black pepper, which he was able to purchase in South India. More important producers of spices were found even further East, and soon a network of European trading posts stretched across Asia.

The exploits of Magellan, Vasco da Gama and the other great navigators make fascinating reading. The Asian societies they visited were equally - if not more - fascinating, but these are often largely ignored in Western accounts of the period. Here the focus tends to be mainly on European achievement rather than on the magnificent Asian civilisations that the explorers encountered. For a lengthier discussion on how Asian societies might be included in the context of the "Age of Discovery", see Chapter 7 on "Asia and the 'Age of Discovery'".

The Age of Discovery leads us to the Age of Colonies - the domination of many Eastern lands by Western powers. Though

the era is called "the Colonial Period", in most of Asia it was not characterised by groups of European migrants settling in new Asian homes. Instead, it was marked by Western military, economic and, to some extent, intellectual dominance of a number of Asian lands. It is an interesting period for the classroom since the theme of imperialism opens the way for lively discussions and challenging ideas. It is a particularly good period for practicing skills of historical analysis. Numerous opportunities are offered for weighing various kinds of evidence, spotting ethnocentric writing and discussing how historians have examined the same evidence and to come to quite different conclusions. With the end of the colonial era, we arrive on the threshold of our present period.

A number of different kinds of East-West relationships emerge from this brief review of historical links between Europe and Asia. There were times when the West was open to ideas from the East and times when the doors and windows were closed and bolted - and vice versa. There were periods when the brilliance of Eastern civilisations far outshone those of the West, and times when the West flourished and outdid the East in great achievements. There were periods when the West and East dealt with each other as equals and periods of dominance. These varied models are useful in thinking about the kind of relations that exist today and that are desirable for the future.

Although colonial empires were dismantled by the middle of the present century, their impact lingers on. Links of trade and aid between Europe and Asia today echo colonial relationships. Asia is important to the West today for a variety of reasons. These include strategic and military considerations and economic challenges posed by Japanese industry and mid-Eastern oil. Asia is also important for the richness and diversity of its present-day cultures. But perhaps Asia is important most of all because our present age is not only one of economic uncertainty and political rivalry between great power blocs, but also because it is an age of great economic disparity between various parts of the world.

The "haves" and "have nots" of our world have been labeled "the North" and "the South". Almost all of Asia (with the exception of Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and the eastern Soviet Union) is classed under this terminology as part of the disadvantaged South. The North, we are often reminded, has 1/4 of the world's people and 4/5 of the world's income. The South has 3/4 of the world's people and 1/5 of the world's income. As might be expected, 90% of the world's manufacturing industry is in the North.

Today's students need to study about Asia in order to be able to make competent judgments about why disparities in economic development exist and how the gap between the rich and poor can be narrowed. They need to be able to weigh problems of trade and aid and to know where they stand on such issues as the growing protectionist reactions to present economic uncertainties.

The Brandt Report is often quoted in this context, and perhaps it is not out of place to include some oft-repeated excerpts here. The Report reminds us that:

> "The world is a unity and we must begin to act as members of it who depend on each other..... Economic growth in one country depends increasingly on the performance of others. The South cannot grow adequately without the North. The North cannot prosper ..... unless there is greater progress in the South."

A more equitable distribution of wealth, it is hoped, will bring not only an economically more stable world but also a more peaceful one. Increasing the chances for world peace offers another good reason for studying about Asia. As the preamble to the Statute of UNESCO states: "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed".

Fostering harmony in a multi-cultural society

Greater harmony between various ethnic communities in European countries has proved another motive for including Asia in the school curriculum. Vietnamese in France, Indonesians in the Netherlands, and Indians, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis in Great Britain have all faced prejudice, racism and discrimination from some segments of their adopted societies. There are a number of ways in which schools can play a role in building good community relations. One of them is teaching about Asia and other minority cultures.

When schools do not teach Asian languages, history, art, music, religion, philosophy, etc, the unstated assumption is that none of these has anything of value to offer. By including Asia in the curriculum, the school makes a small step toward fostering respect for the cultures of the Asian minority, thus combating racism and prejudice and encouraging harmonious community relations.

In most European countries, groups interested in improving community relations have for several years stressed what is variously termed "multi-cultural" or "intercultural" education. (See Chapter 5 on "Classroom Approaches to Asia", for further details.) While, for most of its supporters, multi-cultural or intercultural education includes teaching about Asia, it is generally conceived as a far more wide-ranging educational scheme. For instance, the book "Multi-Cultural Education", published by the BBC, which contains a collection of articles by teachers and others, notes that most contributors saw multi-cultural education as "an all-embracing concept, including the celebration of cultural diversity, anti-racist teaching, and a concern about ensuring equal opportunity for all children of all ethnic groups" (1).

As Jørgen Nielsen noted at the Council of Europe's Teachers Seminar on "The training of teachers of the children of migrant workers: cultural values and education in a multi-cultural society" held in Donaueschingen in 1981, "....ignoring migrant children's cultural and linguistic backgrounds in the daily classroom situation inculcates failure, isolation and inferiority .....". This is a serious shortcoming. Perhaps even more important are the opportunities that are missed for all children. Nielsen argues that " moves from ethnocentric to world-encompassing history and geography teaching are vital, not only for the integration of migrant communities, but also for an understanding of non-European dimensions and perspectives in the world today" (2).

It is perhaps worth repeating here that Europeans today live in multi-cultural societies in a multi-cultural world. Teaching about Asia is relevant in both contexts.

The goal of individual development

Studying about Asia is important for all young people also because this enables them both to broaden their horizons and to understand themselves better. Cultural arrogance built on ignorance is both unattractive and dangerous. Studying different cultures makes pupils better able to appreciate the contributions of their own society and those of others.

In his book "Asia: Teaching About/Learning From", Seymour Fersh quotes the great Asian scholar, William Theodore de Bary, who, writing over twenty years ago, argued that "To the great books of Western civilisation in our liberal education programme, we must now add many more from the East, if only to learn what different things greatness can consist in ....".

De Bary further noted that:

> "Today no people can 'find' themselves or discover their real identity, except in relation to others. In a multi-cultural world, it is impossible even to appreciate one's own past unless its distinctive contributions and comparative limitations can be seen. No national claim, no cultural property, no spiritual authority can be upheld except in a court which does justice to all.
>
> To me, this process of self-evaluation in relation to others, though it may be resisted by both the narrow traditionalist and the activist rebel, represents the natural growth of the great tradition of liberal education in the new age of world community we have entered." (3)

The term "value clarification" has been much discussed in educational circles in recent years, and various educationists have offered teaching programmes that provide not only information and skill building exercises, but also the added

dimension of value clarification. The aim is to enable pupils, through analysis and discussion, to discover what their values are and why they hold them and to improve their ability to weigh issues involving questions of values. It is natural for adolescents to ask such questions as: "Who am I?", "Why am I here?" and "Where am I going?". Discussions that cover not only information but also values can help them find some answers. Asian materials can be particularly stimulating in this context because they offer unexpected alternatives or new ways of looking at things that challenge unexamined assumptions.

Seymour Fersh emphasizes the role that Asian studies might play in the pupils' personal growth. He notes that they can benefit "not only by their increased awareness and understanding of Asian peoples and cultures, but also by their complementary insights into themselves and all humankind. Students will not only know, they will also perceive, feel, appreciate, and realise. Through involvement and purposeful study, they can be helped to develop desirable qualities of empathy, self-development, humility, respect, gratitude, humor, puzzlement, and an overall sense of what it is to be human" (4).

Among the greatest gains to be made from Asian studies is a better understanding of ourselves, our own culture, and its place in the world. This, together with the broadening of cultural horizons, can perhaps provide one of the best answers to the question "Why study about Asia?".

3. EUROPEAN PERCEPTIONS OF ASIA

Where and what is Asia? These seem simple questions, but it quickly emerged at the "Europe and Asia" Seminar that mental maps and images of Asia show great diversity. The French person's Asia is not necessarily the same as the German's or Briton's. There is even some question as to where Asia begins. Seminar participants held a variety of views. For the British, Asia tended to start with the Middle East. However, the popular German view saw India as the beginning of Asia. While Britons made a clear distinction between India and Pakistan, for some of the other participants they were pretty much part of the same thing. To the Austrians, Asia seemed to begin anywhere east of the Urals, while to the Japanese Asia represented the great, unchanging Asiatic rice farming cultures - from which, interestingly, many Japanese now feel they have separated themselves.

One working group of the Seminar devoted its efforts to European perceptions of Asia and looked particularly at stereotypes. This chapter is based largely on their work and on the ideas of several speakers who addressed the Seminar.

Recognising stereotypes

Stereotypes of Asia are developed by children at an early age, and they are derived from a number of possible sources, which include home influence and parental attitudes, school, the media, tourism, and ethnic minority groups resident in the country. Before any serious classroom work is done, it is wise to consider the mental maps and images that children bring with them to school. Several techniques can be used to find out where pupils are in their thinking. For instance, in the Hot Air Balloon Game, pupils pretend that they are travelling round the world in a hot air balloon and are forced to make an emergency stop in, say, Vietnam. What would they expect to see as they landed and when they touched ground? Dense jungles? Vast tracks of vegetation turned to waste land by fire bombs and Agent Orange? Would they meet peasants in rags or guerrillas in black Ho Chi Minh suits and rubber sandals? Pupils can later analyse their answers to explore what sorts of stereotypes they hold and why they hold them. As the unit progresses, pupils can look back and see how and why their thinking has changed.

Asking pupils to make a map marking in as many places as they can, as well as important things that happened there, is another way to find out what they know about Asia or any one Asian country. Here again historical connections tend to influence responses. American students may have much more to fill in on Vietnam than any other Asian country. The Dutch may know where Indonesia is but may have only a vague idea of other places. Japan may loom larger on most maps than it actually should be because it is mentioned more often in the media and, thus, seems to have greater relevance to pupils. Such maps can also be analysed before and after a study of Asia to see how perceptions have changed.

Brainstorming is another way to find out a group's stereotypes of Asia or an Asian country. Brainstorming on China by participants at the "Europe and Asia" Seminar included responses such as:

foot-binding	acupuncture	Chinese restaurants
gun powder	villains	inscrutable
the Yellow Peril	Chairman Mao	1000 year old eggs
Mandarins	Communism	noodles
chopsticks	conformity	
tea	hard working	
opium	the Great Wall	

It was noted that associations, and thus stereotypes, tended to differ with the age of the respondent. Older participants at the Seminar were,thus, more likely to associate China with the Charlie Chan-type screen detective and pig-tailed villains. For younger participants, Chairman Mao and Communism were the first ideas that came to mind. Educational background also made a difference. Those who had learned in school about, or were interested in, the cultural background associated China with various aspects of its cultural heritage, while those exposed to the more usual historical treatment offered images of the Opium Wars, the Boxer Rising and Communism.

The importance of colonial ties and an immigrant community was noted when a similar exercise was tried for India. British associations were clearly influenced by such experience. Responses appearing exclusively on the lists of British participants included bus conductors, cricket, arranged marriages, Christian Aid, illegal immigrants, and Rudyard Kipling.

Windows, mirrors and prisms

Ideas presented in Professor Malcolm Yapp's talk to the London Seminar were particularly useful in focusing attention on how we perceive Asia. A summary of some of these ideas is included below.

Professor Yapp offered an optical tour, considering windows, mirrors and prisms as ways in which we view or think that we view other societies. The idea of the window into another country is often used, but Professor Yapp felt we do not really see each other through windows. A window would allow a clear, undistorted view into the culture as it really is.

In contrast to the window, the mirror reflects images projected in it. Using Asia as a mirror, Europeans have often sought to see their own society better, to examine its virtues and demerits when weighed up against another culture.

Sometimes it has mattered little whether the society used as a mirror was comprehended accurately or not. Thus, Indian spirituality can be contrasted with materialistic European society to show up the latter's defects. China's revolutionary attempts at solving its problems can be held up to show the West

that new paths are possible. Japan can be used as a mirror to show all the things that it is doing right in the economic sphere in order for Europe to see what it is doing wrong. What is important here is one's own society and the direction that it is to take - not whether India is really a spiritual country, or China's Marxist solutions are working, or whether Japan has all the right economic answers.

The prism rather than reflecting light, refracts it. It turns, distorts and changes light and the images that the observer receives. Asian observations of Europe and European views of Asia have often been obscured in this way. Ideas that one society has about the other are often due to the intermediaries between the two cultures, through whom knowledge has been filtered. To learn about another culture, we need brokers, middlemen who will pass on their experience to us. Our ideas of the culture are, thus, distorted by the prism of intermediaries, whether they be translators, diplomats, scholars, traders, businessmen or students.

The school as a cultural broker

Using Professor Yapp's terminology, teachers themselves are also "cultural brokers". Their own attitudes and the materials and activities that they select influence their pupils' views. Stereotypes can easily be passed on unwittingly by teachers. For instance, by focusing on "the immigrant problem", a social studies teacher might confirm the image of immigrants as a "problem" and as cheap labour. The geography teacher who is preoccupied with natural disasters can reinforce the "Asia as a land of disasters" image. History teachers can encourage feelings of cultural superiority by discussing Asian societies only when they were in a state of disintegration and by excluding any reference to great Eastern civilisations and their achievements.

Teachers are often unconsciously biased. Many have never stopped to examine what their attitudes to Asia are and how they were shaped. Many teachers are simply so busy that they have never stopped to consider what is the image of Asia that their class work conveys, or whether or not they are transmitting a negative image simply by omitting Asia entirely. In-service training can help teachers to examine their own assumptions and the "hidden message" that their teaching might convey. Teachers interested in multi-cultural education have, in a number of instances, formed groups to meet informally after school to examine such questions.

Textbooks are, in a sense, also brokers. Stereotypes and bias in textbooks can have a major influence on perceptions of Asia. Very few textbooks produced today are blatantly or intentionally racist or biased. However, subtle bias and ethnocentric thinking are frequently found. Individual instances of bias are not the only concern. Even more important is the "layered effect" produced by book after book, year after year, creating a hard-to-budge sediment of negative images of Asia and Asians.

A number of institutions and groups have given serious thought to textbook evaluation. The Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research in Braunschweig in the Federal Republic of Germany has surveyed many of the textbooks used in European schools, while several groups have issued guidelines for assessing books eg

(i) "Ten Quick Ways to Analyse Children's Books for Racism" which is available from the Council on Inter-Racial Books for Children, 1841 Broadway, New York, NY 10023;

(ii) "Assessing Children's Books for a Multi-Ethnic Society" which has been produced for the Centre for Urban Educational Studies, 34 Aberdeen Park, London N5;

(iii) "Teachers' Guide to the GYSL Development Education Project" published by Nelson (Nelson House, Mayfield Road, Wilton-on-Thames, Surrey KT12 5PL). It contains a list of 16 questions for evaluating geography texts that deal with development.

The media

Outside the school, one of the most important cultural brokers is the media. Television has an especially important place in the lives of most pupils. As many young people spend more time watching television than they do in the classroom, perhaps one of the most important skills the school can teach is how to watch television better. Pupils need skills to analyse and sort out what comes through the television tube. They need to know how not to be manipulated.

A wide range of classroom activities can be used to analyse the media. For instance, an article in the Spring 1980 "World Studies Journal" by Pat Whitaker describes how a television rerun of an old Tarzan film can be used for homework (5). Students could look out for:

(i) issues of race. How is the native population portrayed? How do they dress? How do they speak? What sorts of values do they hold? What is their relationship to the main characters?

(ii) issues of sex differentiation. How are women portrayed? How important are they in the plot?

(iii) issues of class. What background do the main characters come from? What examples of class attitudes or class behaviour can you find?

(iv) issues of conservation. How is wildlife regarded?

The same technique could be used in an Asian context. The television serial "Hawaii Five-O" or "Shogun" or films like

"Bhowani Junction" or "The Seven Samurai" might be analysed in the same way. The British television series "Mind Your Language", set in a language school, cleverly packages a collection of most of the British stereotypes and prejudices about foreigners and immigrants. Pupils might analyse how shows like this, which appear to be all in good fun, affect attitudes towards immigrants and the feelings that immigrants have about themselves and their role in society.

To be fair to the media, European countries do have reasonably informed and balanced documentary programmes, both on television and radio. Unfortunately, they are often broadcast on channels that appeal to minority audiences and not at peak-viewing times. Young people should be equipped to criticise and analyse both up-market documentaries and popular programmes. They should also be aware that many of their attitudes toward Asia are derived from them.

Newspapers are also important media brokers. Speaking at the London Seminar, Asian journalist and author, Dilip Hiro, shared some of his views on "Asia in the News" with the participants. They are summarised here since they are relevant to European perceptions of Asia and the formation of stereotypes.

Hiro noted that most dictionaries define news as something that happened recently. Many, however, have a second definition of news as those things that are a matter of interest to newspaper readers. (According to Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, news is also "material reported in a newspaper ....") News is, thus, not absolute, but relative. We must ask: "news to whom?", "news in what context?" and "news where?". By asking such questions, we can see why newspapers in Europe publish the "news" that they do about Asia.

When we ask, "news to whom?", the answer is, of course, news to readers in Western Europe. This means news to the readership of a Judeo-Christian, liberal, democratic, capitalist society with a colonial history. The Journalists who report the news are also a product of this same society. There is often a feeling that journalists are objective. It is as though they were dropped from the sky into strange environments and look at things there with total objectivity. This is a myth. Journalists are shaped by the society from which they come.

If we ask "what is news?", we must begin by answering that "bad news is news and good news is a big yawn". In general, conflict makes news, while harmony does not. For example, the Iranian Revolution had conflict, drama and bloodshed. It made very good copy. The wire services poured out news, and newspapers could not print it all. They, therefore, needed to select, and, naturally, they selected the most exciting material.

Land reform, on the other hand, which progresses at a slow pace over a long period but which affects the lives of

millions of people, is not dramatic, and, thus, it does not make news.

To look at the news reported from various Asian countries is an interesting exercise. Afghanistan did not exist in most people's minds until the Russians moved in. The country was then put in a Cold War context, and so it made news. Coverage of Bangladesh plays on two themes: "we are always feeding them"; and "they are always having coups d'etat". The "coup d'etat" news runs for seven or eight days and then disappears. The Japanese making robots always makes news because it is a recurrent news theme that Japanese machines seem to be taking over the world.

Reporting on Asia, and on the Third World generally, is influenced by the fact that it is usually done at third remove. Firstly, reporters are removed culturally and religiously from the people about whom they are reporting. Secondly, they generally do not speak the language or languages of the countries that they cover. Thirdly, they get their news mainly from upper class sources. This is partly because they are the only people who speak English. We, thus, often read stories that begin: "As I sat with 'so-and-so' up in the hills over a drink, he explained to me how the peasants live".

Hiro's ideas on the news fit in well with Yapp's idea of prisms which bend and distort the images that we receive. Newsmen, it could be argued, are among our most influential brokers, and pupils need to understand how and why we get the news that we do.

Images of Asians in Europe

Another group of brokers who help to shape Western attitudes toward Asia are the ethnic minority groups of Asian origin in Europe. These groups often attempt to retain their cultural traditions, sometimes triggering a defensive response when local groups feel that their basic values are being challenged. Images of migrants vary from country to country in Europe. Those countries that had colonial empires in Asia tend to sustain a greater interest in people from parts of the world with which they had colonial ties. However, sometimes this interest is overlayed with a sense of cultural superiority left over from the days of the empire. Often, unfortunately, one of the main images that migrant groups project is that of Asia as a threat - a threat to jobs and a threat to Western religions and values. In a sense, this brings us round full circle, for it is the school and the media which bear much of the responsibility for opening avenues of communication between various communities and for building bridges of understanding that will allow diverse groups to share their cultures and to live together as friendly equals.

The image of windows, mirrors and prisms proved to be a powerful one and was referred to at many points during the

London Seminar. In considering perceptions of Asia, two main themes emerged as especially important. Firstly, that images of Asia are diverse. Participants from various European countries brought with them to the Seminar very different ideas of Asia - and a group of pupils in a European classroom is also likely to show a great deal of diversity. Secondly, one of the most important parts of studying about Asia should be examining these diverse images to find out what our perceptions are and how we arrived at them. Real learning can take place only when teachers and pupils have recognised the stereotypes that they hold of Asia and have gained the necessary insight to move beyond them.

4. THE PRESENT PLACE OF ASIA IN EUROPE'S SECONDARY SCHOOLS

It is difficult to generalise about the present place of Asia in school curricula in Europe. Asian nations covered in one European country may not be studied in another, and approaches vary from in-depth case studies to quick, broad surveys. In most countries, some consideration of Asia is included in history, geography and religious education syllabuses. In geography classes in some countries, the trend is toward Development Education, with case studies frequently drawn from Asia. Organisations as UNICEF and the Centre for World Development Education in London, among others, have helped to channel enthusiasm and provide appropriate teaching materials. Asian areas are often selected to provide contrasting pictures of development. For instance, a German participant in the "Europe and Asia" Seminar noted that, in his school system, India is frequently used as an example of a Third World country with enormous potential which must overcome equally enormous present-day difficulties. Japan, on the other hand, is usually seen as a country that has been successful economically, despite nearly overwhelming geographical and environmental odds. China is studied to see how the Communist system works in a populous and rather poor Asian country. This includes how the Communist system has reacted to traditional lifestyles and environmental constraints.

Literature and art

In a number of European countries, literature includes an introduction to some Asian examples, such as Japanese haiku. The Belgian participant in the "Europe and Asia" Seminar was one of several to comment on the successful use of haiku, with pupils writing their own verse in Dutch, English and French. The introduction of haiku has been stimulated in Belgium by the editors of the haiku magazine "Vuursteen".

In some European countries - Denmark, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom, for instance - English literature may include works by Asian, especially Indian, authors writing in English.

Often primary and middle school activities include singing songs, playing games and reading stories from Asia. However, in secondary schools, music and art more often than not ignore the Asian dimension. One exception, however, is Portugal, where in the history of visual arts the ancient arts of the Orient and of Asia Minor are studied both in terms of their own aesthetic characteristics and of their influence on European art. At a later stage, Indian art and "Indo-Portuguese art" are studied (17-18th Centuries). Chinese decorative arts are also studied, especially Chinese porcelain decoration which influenced Portuguese porcelain and decorative tiles.

Historical ties and current events

Numerous factors influence what is presently taught. One important influence is historical ties between Europe and Asia. European countries that had colonial empires in Asia are likely to highlight such areas in the classroom. Thus, history in the Netherlands may include such themes as "From the Dutch East Indies to Indonesia", and geography may make use of case studies from Indonesia to illustrate such topics as economic development in Asia. The Moluccas, rarely covered in other European countries, may feature in both history and geography in the Netherlands. In 1982, the Dutch Organisation of History Teachers produced a survey of subjects taught in history courses in the Netherlands. Among the Asian topics most frequently covered were the East Indies/Indonesia, China after 1941, the Middle East, and South-east Asia. India and Pakistan were rarely covered at pre- university level. In contrast, in the United Kingdom, both history and geography teachers are likely to spend some amount of time on South Asia. In the new area of Development Education, examples are frequently taken from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

In a broader sense, Asian countries are likely to be mentioned mainly when they were of importance to Europe. Thus, it can be said that the history of Japan as it is taught in many European countries can be summed up in five dates: 1905, 1931, 1937, 1941 and 1945.

Current events also influence what is taught. In a number of European countries, Southeast Asia became an important area of study because of the war in Vietnam. Iran and Afghanistan have featured in the classroom in recent years as a result of important changes taking place in these areas. Several partici-pants at the "Europe and Asia" Seminar noted that in the current events approach, recent developments tend to be analysed in the light of international relations. There was a general feeling that historical and cultural background needed greater emphasis. Books discussing the war in Vietnam, it was felt, concentrate too much on global politics and provide too little information on daily life, religions, political ideas or history of the Vietnamese people.

There was a general feeling that many European teachers do try to respond to the "news" about Asia that pours into living rooms every morning and evening via the television. This, it was felt, was an important function of the school. A Finnish teacher stressed that "Pupils may be confused because there are no black and white answers to world problems. Their questions and fears need to be discussed with concern and care. Teachers .... must be prepared to put themselves in the midst of difficult questions; that is what they are there for."

China is one Asian nation that tends to be covered in one way or another in most European countries. However, it is China's modern history that is stressed rather than its ancient culture, with Mao Tse-tung as the focus of most work.

While the ancient river valley civilisations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus valley and the Hwang Ho may be covered somewhere in middle or secondary school, other periods when Asian societies reached great peaks are rarely considered. Thus, when pupils read about Mao's China or Indira Gandhi's India, they have little knowledge of the cultural history that lies behind the modern country.

The image that European countries have of themselves also influences what they teach about Asia. The Nordic countries, for instance, tend to see themselves as intermediaries in the world. Because they are not great powers, they feel they have an important role to play in maintaining world peace. Thus, education for international understanding is given greater emphasis than in some other European countries. Subjects such as Peace Studies have a more important role in Nordic countries than in most other parts of Europe, and Development Education, with examples from Asia, is also stressed.

In Finland, an ambitious project with implications for the study of Asia is the University of Turku's inquiry into "Self Concept and World View". The programme is aimed not at secondary but at primary education. It focuses on how children form a world view. Areas being considered are:

(i) a view of nature;

(ii) a view of man;

(iii) a geographical world view;

(iv) a view of society;

(v) a view of culture.

The significance and development of self concepts in the construction of an overall world view are being investigated. Ideas such as morality and world outlook and "learned helplessness" as a response to world problems are being discussed as part of the project.

The emphasis on Asia and "concerned teaching" has, however, in the opinion of one Nordic participant in the "Europe and Asia" Seminar, caused imbalances in approach in some cases. Teachers may concentrate on the least developed countries or areas hit by severe natural disasters, and Asia is, thus, taught through examples of extreme poverty and distress. Social unrest is a theme that frequently emerges. Thus, students may study about Asia, but get a somewhat dismal and one-sided picture of how half the world's population lives.

In teaching modern Asian languages, the Nordic countries seem to be well ahead of the rest of Europe. In Sweden, for instance, some 60 mother-tongue languages are taught, a number of them Asian languages.

The trend toward teaching Asian languages has been spurred on largely in an effort to meet the needs of migrant communities. It is now widely recognised that a child who speaks Urdu, for instance, at home should have an opportunity to study Urdu in school, as well as the language of the country in which he or she is living. In some countries, such as the United Kingdom, teaching Asian languages has had a slow start, but progress is being made.

The contribution of the teacher

Looking at the broad picture, it must be said that the present place of Asia in secondary schools in Europe is at best a peripheral one. The attention that Asia rates might be summed up by the complaint of a Norwegian participant in the "Europe and Asia" Seminar that the most commonly used basic text book on world history in his district has only 10 pages (less than 5% of the total book) on China, India and Japan. The picture is not totally negative, however. Asian migrants and immigrants living in Europe have in many cases provided the impetus for expanding the curriculum to include Asia. A survey carried out several years ago in the United Kingdom by the National Foundation for Educational Research showed that 77% of teachers interviewed agreed that Religious Education should include the religions of immigrant groups and that 62% felt that the school curriculum should include lessons on the cultures and countries of origin of children of immigrant background.

In several countries, the teacher has a great deal of control over what he or she teaches. Contacts with friends in Asia or with Asian friends in Europe, in-service courses and leisure reading have all prompted teachers to alter the ingredients of their teaching programme, adding at least a dash - if not a healthy dollop - of Asia. In recent years, many more European teachers have travelled in Asia and, they have returned home interested in teaching more about this part of the world.

Even where the set syllabus or examination system mediates against Asia, teachers who have seen a need to teach about this part of the world have managed to work around the constraints. There are a number of efforts underway for expanding and improving the work now done on Asia. There is a growing body of interested teachers and a need for better textbooks, richer library resources, and more in-service training programmes to build on this interest.

5. PROBLEMS AND CONSTRAINTS

Most European teachers would agree that Asia is an important part of the world. Further, many European educators would concur with a majority of the arguments for teaching about Asia put forward in the second chapter of this study. Why then does Asia not play a more important role in European classrooms? The answer, of course, is that numerous problems and constraints stand in the way of expanding and improving coverage of Asia in schools. In examining these, we might begin with the words of that great Asian, Chairman Mao Tse-tung, who said that "in the problem of changing education, it is the teachers who are the main problem".

Was Mao right with regard to Asia in the European classroom today? He did not have the whole answer, but the "Europe and Asia" Seminar showed that many teachers believe that they pose a good part both of the problem and of any potential solution.

The teacher as the problem

The main problem seems to be that teachers have difficulty changing what they teach. To introduce a new unit requires a lot of planning and strenuous work. The effort required may be particularly great in the case of Asia because most teachers have not themselves had the opportunity to learn about this part of the world either in school or at university. The lack of background leads to a crisis of confidence. If one scholar argues that the history of China proves the strength of tradition and another argues that the history of China illustrates change and revolution, which view is the already busy teacher to accept?

To complicate matters further, most teachers have no firsthand experience of Asia. Many teachers have never even met a Chinese, Japanese or Indian person. To take the plunge into an area that is so far away in so many senses takes courage. And when the teacher starts out, he or she has no idea if the output will be worth the enormous effort.

Furthermore, teachers are a part of a larger society. In many European countries, Asian migrants are seen mainly as a "problem". The average European citizen likes to think that, in his or her country, attitudes toward other cultures are governed by tolerance. However, when the question of non-European migrants arises, much of this tolerance evaporates. The majority populations of most European countries have almost a total lack of experience in how to live together with cultures and societies that do not reflect a European heritage. This creates tensions which have given rise to intolerance and a resurgence of fascist and racist propaganda. Both the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers and its Parliamentary Assembly have expressed concern at this development and, in its Declaration on "Intolerance - a threat to democracy" of May 1981, the Committee of Ministers

decided "to reinforce efforts to prevent .... the spread of totalitarian and racist ideologies and to act effectively against all forms of intolerance".

Teaching about contemporary Asia also means teaching about political issues. It means coming face to face with the enormous gap between the rich and poor in our present world. Many teachers approach politics with caution, although their pupils are exposed to political ideas and arguments on television and in the newspapers. But the school often considers politics to be a "hot potato" and avoids them for fear of getting burned. A desire to be cautious and non-committal can mediate against teaching about Asia.

The teacher as the solution

If the teacher is the problem, what then is the solution? In many instances where a teacher working alone may encounter problems, a group of teachers working together may be able to find solutions. Healthy personal contacts with fellow teachers, thus, may be part of the answer. The fear of failure can be diminished when one is able to talk over problems with other concerned teachers. The work-load can also be shared. Two or three teachers can work together at finding and preparing materials for whatever aspect of Asia is to be taught. One participant in the "Europe and Asia" Seminar noted that teachers sometimes work in isolation and are unwilling to share problems and to work together. She added that "we have to re-educate ourselves to see new dimensions inside us, to become more creative and self-confident. This is the basis for continuing education, and it is valid for teaching about Asia and other areas".

In-service training can obviously play a big role. It can contribute on various levels. Courses on racism and stereotypes can help teachers to evaluate their own attitudes and to provide guidance on how such subjects can be treated in the classroom. Materials for teaching about racism and prejudice can be introduced and reviewed. Courses on teaching about current political issues should help teachers to help pupils to learn to think for themselves. Courses on Asian subjects are also needed to fill in gaps in the teacher's background. Teachers who want to teach Chinese or Indian history should, for instance, be offered the opportunity to work with experts in these fields drawn from universities and specialist institutions. Enthusiastic teachers can gain an enormous amount from a month's course aimed at setting out the signposts, which can then be followed in doing further independent study and classroom preparation.

Getting to know Asians is also an important step in teaching about Asia well. Links need to be forged with embassies, cultural societies and local groups of migrants or immigrants. Visits to Asian countries are also part of the answer. Teacher exchange programmes are an area that needs expansion. Subsidised teacher visits during school holidays are another good way for teachers to be acquainted with Asia. Asian governments might be willing to

help to cut costs by providing cheap accommodation in government hotels to groups of teachers. Business or educational institutions might also be willing to provide scholarships for teachers to enable them to make study visits to Asian countries. Setting up successful programmes involves a considerable amount of effort and organisation, and, unfortunately, little is being done at present.

Time and the syllabus as the problem

The teacher, of course, is not the only problem. Many teachers will tell you that their hands are tied by a lack of time and by curricular restraints. The time now allotted for Asian studies is simply not enough for them to do the job well. Furthermore, many European teachers have what was described by one Seminar participant as "an extreme sense of completeness". Geography teachers, for instance, would like students to know all important mountains, rivers, countries, cities, etc. By the time these have been introduced, there is no time for anything else. Thus, students never learn what life in Asia is like or what issues face its people.

History syllabuses usually provide for Asia only in a European context. Thus, teachers in the United Kingdom have plenty of scope for teaching about the British Raj, but little opportunity to teach about the great ages of India's past that preceded it. The innovative teacher may take a week before beginning the Raj to sum up India's long and glorious past and to try to put British rule in an Indian context. But this is not nearly enough time for the job. If more time is taken, teachers feel guilty about straying into areas that are not directly related to exams, and, thus, depriving their pupils of teaching that could bring better exam results.

Another difficulty is that the syllabus too often allows for Asia to be taught only as a "problem". The "problem of migrants" may be studied in social studies and the "problem of over-population" or the "problem of under-development" may be covered in geography. "Political problems" and "economic problems" are two broad headings under which Asia might be included. In either case, little is taught about culture or way of life. Pupils may be exposed to Asia only as a problem and be left with very little understanding of the people whose problems they have studied.

The piecemeal approach to Asia in most school curricula can also impede understanding. India, for instance, may be taught in several contexts in schools in the United Kingdom. The basics of Hinduism may be taught in religious education, the period of British rule in history, and case studies in development may be taught in geography. If all of these were taught, the student would have a fairly broad exposure to India. But the pupils may be unable to put the pieces together and to come up with any coherent picture of Indian society and how it functions.

An alternative might be to choose one Asian country for an in-depth study - looking at culture, religion, geography, economics, etc, in order to see how these interact and influence each other. Asia might best be taught as a subject in its own right. However, if one wanted to introduce a new subject such as "Asian Studies" at the secondary level, this new area would have to compete with the numerous other subjects which are also vying for a place in the curriculum. These would include ecology, computer studies and women's studies.

Most participants at the "Europe and Asia" Seminar felt that it would be better to use the existing curriculum structures rather than to attempt to introduce "Asian Studies" as a new separate subject. Co-operation between teaching departments might go a long way toward providing a better understanding of an Asian society. Thus, if ancient history could be expanded to include a unit on Indian history, and if the unit on Indian history could be timed to coincide with the study of Hinduism in religious education classes, each might complete the other. Furthermore, if teachers of both subjects could co-ordinate their efforts - not necessarily in a team teaching situation but simply so that each was aware of and could build on what the other was doing - the benefits might be enormous.

Materials as the problem

Even if the teacher has the good will and the necessary background to teach about Asia and even if there is a place in the curriculum in which to include this teaching, one further major stumbling block lies along the path to success. Suitable materials for teaching about Asia are insufficient and difficult to find. This is especially true of materials for pupils of average or below average abilities. Materials that are available may be limited in scope. All of Asia, for instance, may be crammed into one slight chapter of a textbook. The teacher can create supplementary worksheets and readings for class use, but this is time-consuming. Also, even if the teacher is willing to take the time, such supplementary materials can be produced successfully only if the teacher has good background resources from which to draw. Too often, even these are not available in schools.

To make matters more complicated, the limited material that is available in standard texts may be dated or may be written from an ethnocentric viewpoint or in a biased way. Dated, ethnocentric and biased material can be useful in teaching pupils how to read critically. But some up-to-date, well researched and sympathetically written material is necessary to form a contrast.

Some good materials on Asia have been produced in recent years, but, in this age of cutbacks, far too often there is simply no money to buy the new materials that the teacher needs.

Teachers must too often rely on free materials to supplement the class text. Free material often means tourist brochures

or booklets produced by special interest groups. Some of this material can be useful, especially in the hands of a skillful teacher. But it is certainly not ideal, and we would be doing our students a disservice if we had to rely on images selected by the tourist board to present a picture of any Asian country today. Tourist brochures may be useful to raise questions about the advantages and disadvantages of tourism in Asia today or to provide useful visual materials - for instance, pictures of street scenes or holiday celebrations. These, however, should be supplementary to a sound central core of well-balanced teaching materials.

While some good books on Asia or on specific Asian countries or on Asian case studies have been produced in recent years, there is still room for many more. Good audio-visual materials are also needed. Teachers at the "Europe and Asia" Seminar noted some areas where they would like to see more materials produced. There was general agreement that more good visual materials are needed. These should show a wide cross-section of the population so that pupils are not led to believe that everyone is either very rich or very poor. They should provide insight into everyday life and the culture of the country. Such materials would go a long way to help pupils to empathise with the people of these distant lands. Since most pupils will not have visited Asia and many may never have met an Asian, good visual materials are essential to successful teaching about Asia in general or any specific Asian country. Sound tracks and teachers' notes are needed in as many European languages as possible.

Good case studies are also in demand. Case studies of life on a farm in China or focusing on life in one village in Indonesia or Bangladesh would be useful. Case studies that could be used in the context of larger themes such as population, urbanisation, or industrialisation would also fit into a variety of teaching situations. Again, these need to be available in as many European languages as possible. The reading level should be within the grasp of ordinary secondary pupils. Too often material of this type is above the ability level of the average student and can be used only with the upper streams.

Primary source material needs to be presented in a way that it can be used in the classroom. Extracts from documents, memoirs, etc, make exciting teaching materials, but while such primary materials are available for Europe, similar materials on Asia have not yet been "packaged" for classroom use. Translations of Asian primary materials into European languages would also be useful.

Literature from Asia also has a role in the European classroom. Collections of short stories and novels or excerpts from novels would be extremely useful. Translations into European languages would be desirable.

Greater access is also needed to materials in English published in Asia. In London, the Independent Publishing Company (Soma Books, 38 Kennington Lane, London SE11) imports books in English from the Indian subcontinent, including children's books. It is widely used and highly praised by teachers. More outlets of this kind for Asian books in English and other European languages are needed.

More good, up-to-date textbooks on all areas of Asian studies are also still needed in all European languages.

Why is there such a dearth of good materials on Asian subjects for school use? The answer is that publishers are not yet convinced that there is a demand. Publishers, teachers and examination boards are all part of the cycle of neglect. Examination boards are perhaps waiting for teachers to pressure them to give Asia a wider coverage. Teachers are waiting for better books to be available so that they can do the job well, and publishers are waiting for the examination boards to move. Most publishers set their lists to meet the syllabuses being taught. If Asia is not on the syllabus, publishers are unlikely to expand in this area. Thus, teachers are unlikely to be enthusiastic about it, and syllabuses are unlikely to change.

Mao was in some ways right. The teacher is undoubtedly the person who has the greatest power to cause educational change or to stifle it. But, when looking at the problems and constraints faced in trying to improve the place of Asia in secondary schools in Europe, it is clear that the teacher cannot bear all of the responsibility for change. Those who set exams and determine the curriculum need to play an active role. The same is true of society in general, which has not pressured schools enough to teach about all of the world.

6. CLASSROOM APPROACHES TO ASIA

Diversity will always exist within European education. Asia is now, and will continue to be, taught in a variety of contexts and through a wide range of approaches. In light of this diversity, this chapter will look at subject areas where Asia might make a contribution as well as some teaching methods that might be used in approaching Asia.

At the outset, it must be stated - as was noted in the previous chapter - that most schools do not have a subject called "Asian Studies" and are not likely to incorporate such a new subject into the curriculum. In most cases, Asia will continue to be taught in the context of traditional single subjects. Geography, history and religious education are likely to remain the subjects with the greatest emphasis on Asia, with music, art, literature and languages, home economics, social studies, and the sciences beginning to play a larger role. Where courses such as humanities, international relations, peace studies, and economics are offered, Asia should play a major role in these subject areas.

One of the problems of the single subject approach is that pupils are exposed to Asia in a fragmented way. To understand any Asian society, the pupils must see how geography, politics, economics, religion and culture interact and influence each other. An oft-repeated complaint is that where Asian geography, economic development, or modern history are taught at present little of the cultural context is included. Names, dates and statistics still too often dominate teaching. Pupils are rarely given an opportunity to move even a little way inside the culture to glimpse the world from its point of view.

There are, of course, exceptions. For instance, Atlantic College in Glamorgan, Wales, offers a two-year subsidiary level course in Chinese studies for the International Baccalaureate examination. The course seeks to offer a general introduction to traditional, modern and contemporary China. Various disciplines are drawn on for course material, and great emphasis is placed on the study of primary sources in translation. A resource bank has been built up to make this possible.

In schools which are unable to provide such specialised courses, an interdisciplinary approach to Asia would allow a fuller picture of any Asian society to emerge. However, interdisciplinary team teaching has been adopted successfully in few European schools. Many teachers feel that the organisation and time required for interdisciplinary team teaching are not worth the results obtained. In most cases, the school timetable militates against such efforts. Administrators are, thus, often less than enthusiastic.

While a full team teaching approach might not be possible in most cases, some co-ordination between teachers of various disciplines should be possible. Thus, when pupils are studying Islam in religious education classes, they might do work on the geometric and floral patterns used to decorate Islamic buildings in art classes. Or they might look at the art of the book in the Islamic world and the importance of calligraphy as an art form. If the syllabus does not make it possible for art projects to be related to religious education classes, some work on Islamic art might be included as part of religious education.

In this and other cases, it might be necessary for teachers to include material that is not traditionally a part of their discipline in order to provide a cultural context for Asia. Thus, excerpts from novels or short stories might be used in geography classes on development to provide an understanding of the society in which development is taking place. Works written by Asians expressing the viewpoint of the rich and the poor, the city dweller and the villager, might help pupils to see the diversity of demands and needs within the society. Music, art, popular cinema, religious works and philosophical statements might all, thus, have a role to play in the history or geography classroom. Teachers will need to master enough of these other outside areas in order to use them for their own purposes.

Given the constraints of time and the syllabus, it is impossible to provide a full and fair picture of every Asian society. The teacher must often decide whether to skim across the surface of as many Asian countries and cultures as possible, or to attempt an in-depth study of one Asian society. A sensitively taught in-depth course on one culture seems to bring rewards in empathy and understanding that a broad survey cannot hope to achieve.

So far in this study, much has been said about empathy and understanding, but little about skills. Advocates of such areas as Asian Studies are sometimes accused of emphasizing empathy at the expense of the acquisition of basic skills. But it is not an "either skills or empathy" situation. Whatever one's approach to teaching about Asia, skill-building will be an important part of the teaching and learning experience. Learning about Asia offers opportunities both for building skills and for gaining an understanding of the world in which we live, one's fellow human beings, and oneself.

Intercultural education

Before looking at some approaches to Asia that might be taken in single subject areas and at some teaching methods that might be used, a phenomenon related to Asian studies, but reaching beyond it, should be mentioned here. This is multicultural or intercultural education. Various definitions are offered for these terms. For most advocates, the central objective is to provide the best education for all children in a multicultural society. This includes developing bridges of communi-

cation and understanding between the different groups that make up the community.

Multi-cultural or intercultural education is not seen as a new subject to be added to the curriculum. It is instead a way of viewing education that affects everything that happens in the school. Many schools in Europe have established committees to examine how their particular school is meeting the challenge of a multi-cultural society. The work of several such committees in the United Kingdom is reported in Richard Willey's "Teaching in Multi-cultural Britain". Their considerations make interesting reading and show how wide-ranging the educational response towards a multi-cultural society can be. One group offered the following definition of multi-cultural education for discussion:

> "Multi-cultural education is a whole curriculum which also involves an attitude to life. It aims to promote a positive self image and respect for the attitudes and values of others. Such an education will improve academic attainment." (6)

A committee at another school formulated five questions that all teachers should ask themselves. These were:

(i) to what extent does the content of my subject involve cultural attitudes and assumptions? Am I consciously or unconsciously projecting certain values? Are they likely to seem difficult or strange to some pupils?

(ii) do the examples/topics/areas of study which I have chosen reveal ethnocentric bias? Could I change to other topics which would teach the same skills but be more interesting, accessible and acceptable in a multi-cultural society?

(iii) textbooks and materials - looked at critically, are they appropriate for a multi-cultural society? Would they put off a child from a minority ethnic group? Are the people all white, are the success stories white success stories, are other groups presented paternalistically?

(iv) do minority group pupils do poorly in my lessons as a group or as notable individuals? Can this failure be related to the content or presentation of the lessons?

(v) examination success - are there correlations between success in my subject and pupils' cultural background, and if so what? (e.g. Asian pupils successful in science, black girls in history.) (7)

Another interesting source of information on educational responses to the challenge of preparing young people for life in

a multi-cultural society is "The Compendium of information on intercultural education schemes in Europe" that was published by the Council of Europe in 1983 (8).

Geography and development

One of the newest and most interesting approaches to Asia in the geography classroom is development education, and the report of the Seventh Council of Europe Teachers' Seminar on "Development education in secondary schools" (March 1980) treats this subject in more detail than can be included here (9).

Like multi-cultural education, the term "development education" has been defined in a variety of ways, and advocates of development education hold a wide spectrum of views on what should actually be taught in the development education classroom. One definition that would be accepted by many but not all supporters of development education is "those processes of thought and action which increase understanding of world-wide social, economic, and political conditions which relate to, and are responsible for, underdevelopment. Its purpose is to encourage widespread involvement in action for improvement" (10).

UNICEF's study group on development education sees it as "a core educational process which concerns the child and his relationship to the environment in which he lives, both locally and globally. It aims at developing an understanding of the realities of a changing and increasingly interdependent world, and encourages a sense of solidarity, sharing and participation in efforts to improve the quality of life for all mankind." (11) The UNICEF group lists seven fundamental objectives:

(i) to stimulate a critical discussion about what development is and should be, and the fact that it is of concern to every country and to every individual;

(ii) to arouse children's awareness of, and curiosity about children of other lands, their ability to analyse their own situation and that of others, and to identify global problems and relate them to their own society and everyday concerns;

(iii) to enable children to recognise, understand and respect differences between peoples and to stimulate them to learn from other cultures through exchange of experience;

(iv) to explain the causes and consequences of poverty, and the need to fight against social and economic injustice and intolerance;

(v) to stimulate and sustain the child's interest in the processes of change - economic, social and environmental;

(vi) to strengthen co-operation and solidarity between peoples and respect for human rights;

(vii) to encourage children to participate in the development of their immediate community and to become active and responsible members of local, national and global society.

Among the most recent development education programmes produced for schools in the United Kingdom is the "Geography for the Young School Leaver (GYSL) Development Education" Project. It lists as its aims:

(i) to produce materials which will help to make students aware of many of the crucial issues that affect Third World countries;

(ii) to emphasize the interrelationships between the North and the South. Incorporate recent developments in Geography which highlight human welfare;

(iii) to raise questions which challenge eurocentric and value laden assumptions, and involve students in ethical dilemmas;

(iv) to stimulate discussion amongst teachers concerning ways of incorporating the aims of development education into the Geography curriculum;

(v) to produce students' material which may be used across the whole ability range within the 14-16 age group. (12)

In this and other development education programmes, Asia tends to be taught through case studies illustrating larger themes such as urbanisation, industrialisation, agricultural change, or tourism. As an alternative, a regional approach might be used, looking at how various factors interact in one Asian country. As well as looking at various themes, the GYSL Project offers two regional case studies: one on Peru and the other on the Middle East. This approach provides a greater opportunity for considering customs, culture, and religion as well as economic, political and geographic factors.

Like all other subjects, development education can be taught either well or badly. It is sometimes criticized for reinforcing negative images of the Third World by emphasizing poverty, over-crowded living conditions, inadequate diets, backward farming methods, etc. Where it is taught well, however, a balanced picture is presented and Third World societies are introduced in an honest and sensitive way. The development education approach to Asia is one that is likely to grow and to play a larger role in geography teaching.

A less ethnocentric approach to history

In history, efforts range from the gradualist approach of improving existing syllabuses to the more revolutionary approach of adding to the curriculum new courses either on Asian history or on world history with an important Asian element. Those who see more hope in gradual change would, for instance, continue to teach about such ancient civilisations as Egypt and Mesopotamia, but would add more and better material of the Indus valley civilisation and the Hwang Ho civilisation of ancient China.

In the period now often called "the Age of Discovery", the emphasis would be shifted to a less Eurocentric viewpoint. Instead of simply following the explorers, the pupils would also have an opportunity to learn about the societies in Asia that the explorers encountered. Pupils might, for instance, study in depth several of the societies that the explorers visited. Instead of following the route of the explorers, they would then be in a position to wait for the explorers to come to them. It has been suggested that the period should be called "the Age of Encounter" rather than "the Age of Discovery", and that it should stress the encounters that took place between cultures rather than simply celebrating Western achievement. Possibilities for studying Asia in the context of the "Age of Discovery" were discussed in further detail at the Council of Europe Symposium for history teachers on "Teaching about the Portuguese Discoveries in secondary schools in Western Europe" held in Lisbon in July 1983. Chapter 8 of this study provides a fuller discussion of teaching approaches in this area.

Teaching the history of more recent periods might be improved by making more use of the works of Asian writers. This is especially true when studying Asian independence movements. There is a saying that hunting stories will always glorify the hunter, until the lions have their own historians. Asian societies have had their own historians for centuries, but the Western hunters have often preferred their own version of events. Mao's writings are well known, but those of other great Asians who shaped their countries' futures should also find a place in the classroom. The works of Asian historians might be compared with those of Western historians to see how the same events can be interpreted in different ways. Historical novels and short stories written by Asians are also useful for setting the scene and helping pupils to see events through Asian eyes.

The problem with the gradualist approach is that Asia is still being studied only at times when it was important to the West. Those who advocate a separate course on Asian history or on world history with Asia forming an important element would like to see the history of Asia and other parts of the world studied for their own merit rather than for their relationship with European history. Various world history syllabuses have been put forward to achieve this aim, e.g. "World History for 16 to 18+", which is available from the Extramural Division, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.

New trends in history teaching include:

- using primary materials;
- learning to weigh different types of evidence;
- analysing, categorising and synthesizing;
- asking not only what we know about the history of any period but also how we know that it is true;
- looking at change and what causes it;
- developing empathy and historical imagination.

It goes without saying that all of these new developments in history teaching can be applied to teaching about Asia.

Approaching Asia through its religions

Religious education has offered one of the more outstanding success stories with regard to teaching about Asia in European classrooms. The large number of Muslim - and, to a lesser extent, Hindu and Sikh - children in European classrooms has forced schools to reconsider religious education. The result has been the inclusion of non-Western religions in the syllabus. Groups such as the Shap Working Party in the United Kingdom have been formed to improve the quality of teaching of non-Western religions. Conferences have been held on national and international levels. Publishers have responded by producing more and better materials on various religions of the world.

Non-Western religions are to some extent able to speak for themselves through their holy books and traditional religious stories. Adherents of most faiths are present in many European communities, and they can be invited to explain and expand on what their religion means in their life. Visits to mosques, temples and gurdwaras are possible since all of these have been established in many communities in Europe. Religious education has provided opportunities for understanding Asian religions and cultures as they exist in Asia and for studying non-Western religions as they are practiced by adherents in Europe.

Obviously, much work still needs to be done in this area, but the approach to Asia through its religions has proved a rewarding one.

Another way of teaching about Asia in the context of religious education has been the inclusion in "ethics" of discussion of the gap between the rich and poor in the world. Many advocates of development education feel it has an important role to play in religious education as well as in geography. Discussions in religious education often emphasize the response that the West should make to poverty, malnutrition, etc, in Asia. Materials produced by Oxfam, Christian Aid, War on Want, UNICEF, etc, are used in this context. Young people may take part in working for positive change. Activities may range from raising money for projects in developing countries to writing letters to

politicians or newspapers urging policies that the pupils feel would help to right the present imbalance.

Examining racism and migration in social studies

Approaches to teaching about Asia in social studies can include work on stereotypes, prejudice and racism. At one time, such subjects were rarely mentioned in schools, but in a growing number of classrooms they are now discussed freely and openly. In the United Kingdom materials such as "Recognising Racism", a filmstrip/slide and cassette presentation produced by the City of Birmingham Education Department, and "Roots of Racism" and "Patterns of Racism" published by the Institute of Race Relations, London, are now available for classroom use.

Migration is another theme which is sometimes discussed in social studies classes. Projects on such themes as "Moving and Settling" have proved successful. Work might begin with a discussion of relatives or other people who have migrated. Migrations of Europeans to the USA and Canada might be covered as well as the migration of Italians to Switzerland or Britons to Australia. The migration of Asians to Europe might be viewed in this context, with pupils looking at why different groups have migrated, how they have settled in their adopted countries, and how the people already living in these societies, some of whom were the descendants of migrants of earlier generations, have reacted to the newcomers.

Various kinds of "Roots" projects are also possible in a social studies context, with members of the class looking into their own family histories. Pupils might also trace the history of various ethnic minorities in Europe. Groups such as South Asians in Britain probably have a longer history in their host countries than most pupils realise, and they have also probably made more contributions to these countries than most pupils are aware of. In the London Borough of Brent, a local library has collected photographs and information on the theme of "Roots in Britain", focussing on the history of Blacks and Asians in Britain. This exhibition is loaned to schools.

Other approaches to Asia in social studies classes include adding an Asian element to activities on such themes as "Family" and "Work" and "Government".

Opportunities in art and music

The possibilities of approaching Asia through its art are numerous, varied and exciting, and Asian traditions should be included in the teaching of art history. The art of the Middle East, India, China, Japan, and Southeast Asia offers an incredibly rich store of material. Furthermore, Asian ways of perceiving and techniques of working have influenced some of Europe's finest artists. The European classroom needs to be opened to the great traditions of the East.

Art education in schools should not only expose students to Asia's great works of art but should also explore the thought and culture behind these works to make them "legible" to European pupils. Pupils should have an opportunity to work in Asian styles and should be introduced to uniquely Asian art forms such as Islamic or Japanese calligraphy. They should be able to take pen or brush in hand and work with the materials used by Asian practitioners to experiment with these art forms. Asian crafts also provide a rich area from which to draw. For example, they offer much more exciting possibilities than the run-of-the-mill ceramic ashtrays so often seen in school displays of pupils' work. Finally, pupils should have an opportunity to integrate Asian ways of perceiving and creating into their own storehouse of artistic ideas.

The much-neglected area of music also offers considerable opportunities. Singing songs from Asia - including folk, religious, popular and patriotic works - should form a part of music activities in all European schools. At the very least, pupils should have an opportunity to hear classical Chinese, Japanese, Indian and other Asian music. Some teachers have played such music to their pupils and asked them simply to try to match up the names of the countries with the examples of music played. A more serious effort might also be made to understand the various traditions of Asian music. Local Asian musicians and music societies can provide invaluable help in helping young people to understand and appreciate Asian music.

Learning to play musical instruments used in various Asian traditions is another possibility. At the very least, students should be able to see such instruments first hand and hear them being played.

Popular Asian music might find a place in the classroom as well as classical music. Western popular music influenced by Eastern thought or rhythms might be an avenue for gaining pupil interest.

Asian dance traditions might also be introduced. Films are available illustrating various dance styles, and a member of one of the local Asian communities might be willing to teach pupils a simple dance. To actually participate in Asian dance is, of course, much more exciting than simply being an observer.

Some schools have had great success with dance projects in which groups of pupils learned a dance from one particular area. Each group then perfomed for the others or for a larger audience.

Teaching Asian languages and literature

The most obvious approach to Asia in language and literature teaching is the introduction of modern Asian languages in the school curriculum in Europe. These languages have been introduced mainly because they are the mother tongue languages of minority groups. In some schools, teaching in areas such as mathematics

or science is carried out in the mother tongue until pupils have gained a sufficient grasp of the language of the European host country. In a growing number of countries, pupils are taught their mother tongue at school, sometimes in place of a second or third European language. The Nordic countries have been leaders in mother tongue teaching, with Sweden, for instance, offering over 60 home languages. Studying modern Asian languages is not in most cases restricted to Asian pupils. By offering Arabic, Hindi or Chinese to all pupils, the school is making the statement that these languages are worth learning.

Asian literature is a rich area for study, which is open for exploration in language or literature classes. Translations of Asian works might be included in world or comparative literature classes along with translations of great Russian, French or German works. Many works by Asian authors are written in "European" languages such as English or French, and they can, thus, be read in the original in literature classes. In the United Kingdom, a few schools, mainly in areas with large immigrant populations, have begun to teach a unit on South Asian writing in English as part of the English literature syllabus. The same tools of literary criticism can, obviously, be used to analyse Asian literature as are used for other traditions.

In some German schools, advanced English classes read novels written in India by Indian authors writing in English, as well as selections from the vast store of English literature produced in the United Kingdom. Reading Indian novels in English opens opportunities for discussing Indian culture and Britain's past and present ties with India.

Where literature is taught through a thematic approach, Asian examples can easily be included. Some themes might be chosen specifically for their relevance to a multi-ethnic society. For a theme such as "On the Move", for instance, works might be selected from Japanese, Indian, European, American, and African literature. "Moves" might include from village to city, or from one country to another, or within the same country in search of a better life. Exposure to such literature should help immigrant pupils to work out their conflicting feelings about being part of European society. They should help European pupils to see that migrations have taken place in all parts of the world in all historic periods and to understand the human suffering, the great rewards and the everyday challenges that migration entails.

Many schools have had success with introducing special Asian forms of literature. The most popular of all is Japanese haiku. One Finnish participant in the "Europe and Asia" Seminar brought examples of Japanese haiku style poems written in Finaland e.g.

Summer

Sunshine is warm
Sea smells and
The last blue flower of May

Reading and writing haiku in the literature classroom could, of course, be co-ordinated with work on Japan in other subject areas.

Several groups in Europe have launched projects to collect and translate the stories of immigrant groups. These include the folk and religious stories that grandparents might tell to their grandchildren in the home country. Tapes of such stories in the home language are being introduced in lower and middle schools, and booklets with such stories both in the home language and in the language of the European host country are being prepared for the classroom.

Asia in home economics and science

Many adults wish that they had had a chance at school to learn to cook Chinese, Japanese, Indian or Middle Eastern food. If in no other way, Asia has at least touched the palate of many Europeans. More than the token curry or nasi goreng is, of course, required if pupils are to develop any understanding of or skill with Asian foods.

Units on Asian foods could be tied to work done in other subject areas. A Chinese banquet might be prepared to tie in with work on Chinese culture or an Indian vegetarian meal to tie in with a discussion in religious education of the role of vegetarianism in religions such as Hinduism and Buddhism.

Rather than follow a country or area approach, some home economics teachers choose one type of food, such as fish, and they then explore how families from various ethnic groups present in the classroom prepare this food at home. Sensitivity of approach is all important if pupils are to share their ideas. As Christine Traxon, Head of home economics at Holyhead School in Birmingham, notes in her contribution to the BBC's "Multi-cultural Education", if you insensitively ask pupils direct questions like "What do you eat at home?" you are likely to get answers like "We eat the same as you" (13). By gaining the confidence of pupils, she notes, a discussion of bread leads pupils, naturally and unselfconsciously, to discuss pumper-nickel, croissants and chapattis.

Approaches to Asia in the context of science are negligible at the present time, although there is scope for teaching about great Asian achievements of the past and present in all fields of science. The Indian astronomer and mathematician, Aryabhata, for instance, speculated in around 500 AD that the earth revolved around the sun and rotated on its axis. For mathematical cal-culations, Aryabhata used the decimal system of numerals, devised and developed by earlier Indian mathematicians. The system was eventually passed to Europe through the Arabs. It freed Western mathematics from the cumbersome system of Roman numerals and allowed for developments in science and mathematics that would have been impossible without this new flexible system.

At the very least, posters and bulletin board displays in the classroom should reflect Asian contributions. Textbooks and workbooks should have pictures of Asian scientists and laboratories as well as those from the West, and pictures of pupils working on experiments should include black and Asian faces as well as white ones.

The role of the school library

Approaching Asia in any subject area in this chapter is difficult, if not impossible, without the support of the school library. Teachers will not have much success with projects on Asia if there are no suitable books for pupils to work with. For young people browsing in the library, there should be books on Asian crafts, art, dance, music, religions, history and everyday life. There should be novels by Asian writers in the original if this is suitable or in translation. There should be books in mother tongue languages. And there should be books by immigrants from Asia or writers of Asian origin living in Europe. Books like Farrukh Dhondy's "Come to Mecca" and Rukshana Smith's "Sumitra's Story" deal with the kinds of emotions and situations that pupils of Asian origin face every day. The former is an award-winning collection of stories about children growing up in multi-ethnic Britain. The title story is about two young Bangladeshi in the East End of London and their friendship and crossed lines of communication with a politically active young British woman. The title comes from the invitation by one of the boys to their friend to come to Mecca with him. He means the British dance hall, but she takes it as an invitation to the Holy City and declines on the grounds that she is not a Muslim.

Sumitra's story deals with a young girl of Asian origin growing up in Britain, caught between two cultures and faced with an arranged marriage that she does not want. Fictionalised versions of such cultural conflicts can help young people to sort out their own lives.

7. TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

Learning about any subject, no matter how potentially exciting it may be, can be boring if the methods and techniques used are not varied and stimulating. Every good teacher has a stock of teaching and learning methods that can be adapted to different subject areas and circumstances. Most teachers today use a combination of lectures, group work, panel discussions, debates, films and other audio-visual aids in the course of any given unit of work. As "variety is the spice of good teaching", a number of techniques and methods for approaching Asia are listed below. Several of them involve the possibilities offered by "Asia in Europe". These include the rich Asian resources available in museums and, even more important, the valuable expertise of the local Asian communities. The list below, of course, outlines only a few of the main possibilities.

Using museums

Many museums provide guided tours, worksheets, information packets and project books on their Asian collections for young people. The "Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst" (Museum of East Asian Art) in Cologne, for example, provides a series of information sheets on specific subject areas such as Painting in East Asia, Ancient Chinese Bronzes, the Development of the Buddha Image, and Korean Art. These are available in English, French and German. The "Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde" (National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden has produced a series of workbooks and study kits for schools on subjects such as clothing and housing in various parts of the world. Several booklets for students on Indonesia are also available. The education service of the British Museum in London offers a booklet with detailed teacher's notes on its Asian collection. Several foldout sheets on Hindu deities and their representation in Indian sculpture are also available. The Victoria and Albert Museum in London has produced several guides to Asian art in general and to its own collection in particular. These are only a few of the museum resources available.

If museum education services are contacted, special visits geared to class work can be arranged in many museums. Museum education officers have indicated, in fact, that they would like to do more with their Asian collections, if only teachers would let them know what they need.

Some museums have created new programmes to meet the needs of a multi-ethnic society. Two Dutch museums with interesting new approaches are the Tropics Museum in Amsterdam and the Historical Museum in Rotterdam. The Tropics Museum offers a school programme which focuses on the background of various groups living in the Netherlands. The museum has created four environments: a Dutch town square, a Surinam bush village, a Turkish village and an itinerant gypsy camp. As part of a simulation exercise, pupils are divided into three groups who

act out the roles of those living in the non-Dutch environments. As part of the simulation exercise, all of the groups decide to move to the Netherlands and, at the end of the programme, they meet together in the town square to discuss their various backgrounds and the experience of migration (14).

The Historical Museum in Rotterdam has revamped its tours to include information relevant to children of Asian origin. School groups are now told, for instance, that the tulips painted on Dutch tiles were not originally Dutch, but came from Turkey. The technique for glazing was taken from Mediterranean countries. Patterns on some of the earliest tiles made in Rotterdam were copied from Moroccan tiles, and the blue colour used on Dutch tiles was an imitation of imported chinaware. The Museum has also organised several projects in conjunction with the Ethnographical Museum, including a puppet project with shadow puppets from China, Indonesia and Turkey, and a travelling exhibition about the Moluccans that was put together with the help of people from the Moluccan community in the Netherlands.

Contacts

The imam from the local mosque, the priest from a Hindu temple, a community member who plays an Asian musical instrument, someone willing to demonstrate an Asian dance form, or a mother willing to show pictures of her wedding and talk about marriage customs in her community are all possibilities for visiting speakers. There are, of course, numerous other topics that community members could talk on. Such talks make an interesting way of learning, and they establish important links between the school and minority communities. Visits to mosques, temples, cultural centres, restaurants, and Asian shopping areas are other possibilities. Again, they help students to learn about Asia and to feel at home with the local Asian community.

Writing to pen friends in Asia and keeping in touch with schools there is yet another way of learning about Asia and of making Asian studies an experience of finding out about real people like oneself.

Working with artifacts

The Danish ethnographic study boxes are among the most well-developed kits that allow pupils to work with items from Asia. These kits were put together by ethnographers and anthropologists, and they contain a range of artifacts representing life at one place at one time. There are items of clothing, cooking utensils, farm tools, crafts, etc. Teachers are required to attend an in-service course before using the materials.

Using the media

Analysing news reports, spotting and collecting examples of ethnocentric writing, keeping a current events notebook with newspaper reports about Asia, keeping a record of what makes

"news" on Asia, and making a collage of headlines about Asia or one Asian country are just a few ways of using the national or local press. Asian newspapers or magazines might also be brought into the classroom. Some might be in Asian languages so that pupils can see various Asian scripts. Asian fashion magazines or sports magazines, including those on martial arts such as karate, might be especially interesting to pupils.

Pupils can collect cartoons about Asia or make their own. Teachers have reported success using cartoons from which they have removed the words, asking students to fill in their own.

Pictures of luxurious tourist resorts, stark black and white photographs of poverty, war scenes, views of the exotic East, and newspaper pictures of disasters might be collected to show the various images of Asia in the West. These can be particularly useful in discussing perceptions of Asia in the West and what they are based on.

Television shows on Asia can also form the basis for classroom discussion.

Films can be used simply for visual stimulus or to train young people to analyse what they see. Films like "The Deer Hunter" and "Apocalypse Now" could be used in the context of teaching about Vietnam, while "Gandhi" is an excellent film for work on the Indian independence movement.

Recording memories

In a class which includes migrant children who have spent part of their lives in an Asian country, projects based on childhood memories can be rewarding. If such work is handled sensitively, each child should have an important contribution to make. Pupils should be able to see that, while memories of growing up in Asia are in some ways different from those of growing up in Europe, they are also very similar in many ways.

Memories of parents, grandparents and other members of the local Asian community can also make interesting material for the classroom. Muslims who have made the Hajj or Hindus who have made a pilgrimage to the Ganges might be interviewed for reports on such subjects. Pupils doing reports of village or city life in Asia might obtain valuable information from people who have lived there.

Collecting

If they are collectors, pupils might analyse the priorities of Asian countries by what the government puts on its stamps or its money. Does the country want to be known for modern steel mills or ancient works of art? Or both? The value appears on each Indian currency note in 14 different languages. What does this tell you about India?

A bulletin board could be set aside for Asian proverbs or sayings or for tracing the etymology of words in European languages that are borrowed from Asian tongues.

Learning through games

In the BBC's "Multi-Cultural Education", one teacher reports: "We use the Aid Committee Game, the Trade Game, Star Power, Gronks and Friends, the Poultry and Poverty Games, and Ba Fa Ba Fa (all available through Oxfam)" (15). Numerous other games are also available and students can create more. "Experiencing Indian Languages" outlines a good game which is based on communication between various groups in the class through codes. This illustrates the difficulties of communication in a country with numerous regional languages.

Organising "Come over to my house" displays

This method is used especially with younger classes. Two or three special things from home might be shown to the class and then included in a classroom display. Parents might come to the school to help explain what the items are, how they are used, and why they are special or important to the family.

Creating "the total experience"

Most pupils enjoy having a chance to wear Asian clothes, eat Asian food, listen to Asian music - in fact, to create the atmosphere of Asia in the classroom. One teacher who had spent some time in Asia organised such an experience, but at the last minute, he realised something was missing. He quickly turned up the thermostat to get the right temperature. Then it really was like the Asia that he knew!

8. ASIA AND THE "AGE OF DISCOVERY"

The Council of Europe's Symposium for history teachers on "Teaching about the Portuguese Discoveries in secondary schools in Western Europe" that was held in Lisbon in July 1983 offered a further opportunity to look at the possibilities for teaching about Asia in the context of the "Discoveries". This strong link with the "Europe and Asia" Seminar led to the inclusion of the present chapter in this study.

The Symposium also offered an excellent opportunity for co-ordination between the Council of Europe's Art Exhibitions and the Organisation's educational programme. As was pointed out in the previous chapter, museum holdings are a rich but too frequently ignored educational resource. By bringing European history teachers to Lisbon to feast on this excellent Exhibition and by providing them with a forum to discuss the best ways to teach about the Age of Exploration, the Portuguese authorities offered an ideal setting for an examination not only of academic themes but also of the role that museum holdings (and visual materials based on them) can play in bringing history to life in the classroom.

The aim of the Council of Europe's Art Exhibitions is to illustrate major aspects of European art, culture and history in order to stimulate appreciation and knowledge of Europe's cultural heritage. The series of exhibitions has proved an excellent way to demonstrate that, despite wars and differing political approaches, European culture has been woven from many common threads. The Lisbon Exhibition offered a view of Europe's first organised contacts as a continent with other parts of the globe. Some sections of the Exhibition were devoted to setting the scene for the age by looking at Portuguese culture and history prior to this period. Other sections focussed on the channels of communication between Portugal and the rest of Europe, as well as the cultural and artistic links that were set up. The technical means by which actual contacts between European and non-European cultures were achieved and the scope of these contacts were the subject of further sections. Displays included specific themes such as the development of nautical science and the evolution of weapons, both of which made possible the successful exploration of the oceans.

An exhibition of pupils' work on the "Age of Discovery" was also held in Lisbon, and the participants in the Symposium were particularly impressed by the work displayed. Co-operation between arts and crafts teachers and history teachers had resulted in a stunning collection of works on the theme of the voyages of exploration. These included paintings, drawings, collages, tapestries, ceramic figures, giant papier-maché constructions, and delicate model ships. One of the most interesting works was a painting from the period copied by the pupils. However, in place of the original faces, the pupils had painted their own, literally transporting themselves back to the 16th Century.

Intercultural understanding

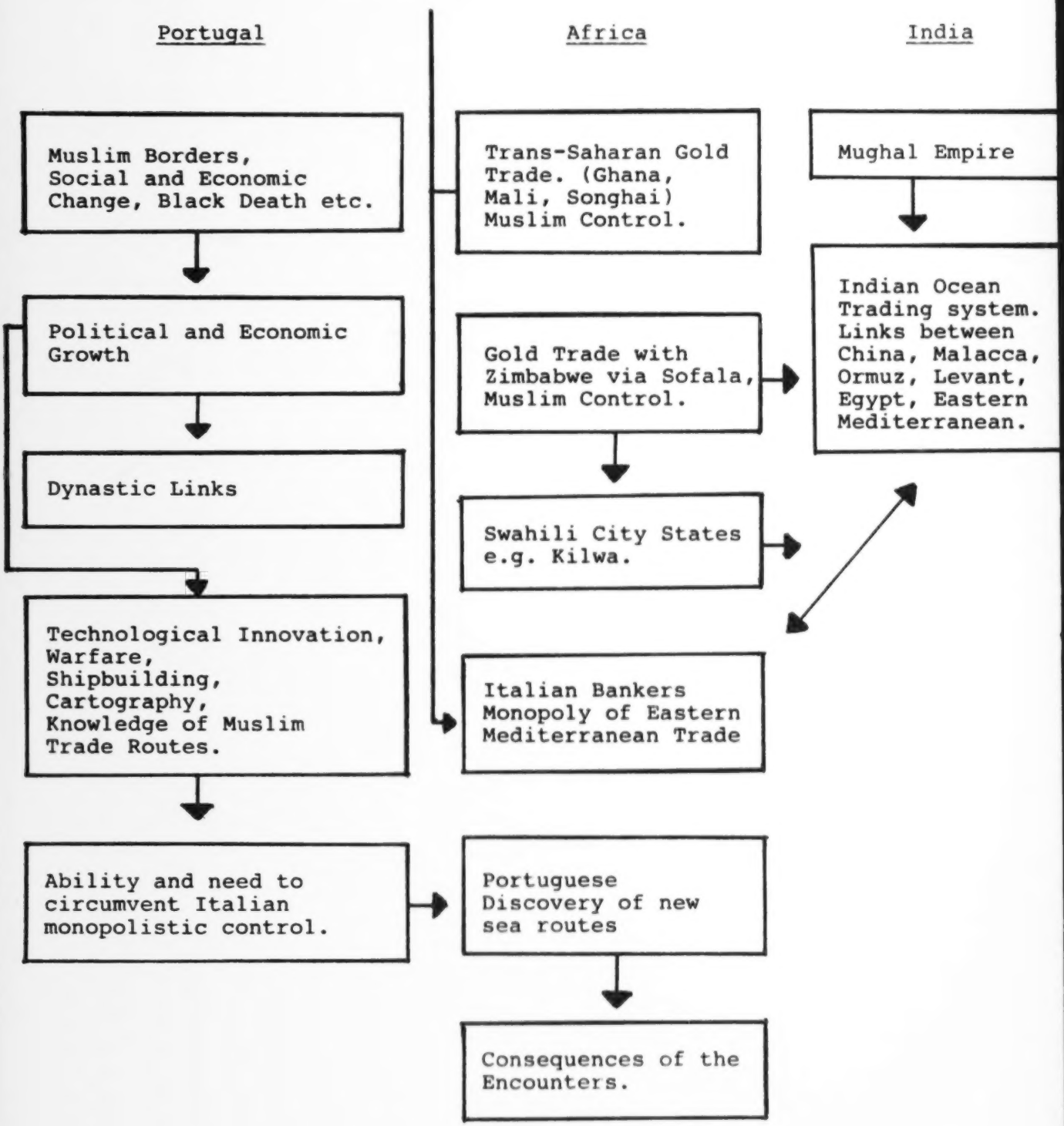
Almost every European school child meets Asia in the company of the great navigators and explorers such as Magellan and Vasco da Gama. Most come away with a pride in European achievement but with little knowledge of the fascinating civilisations thriving in Asia at the time of these great voyages. The "Age of Discovery" is often a favourite unit of middle and lower secondary teachers, because it offers exciting material on courageous endeavours and great sea adventures. It is, indeed, very tempting to present the era in a chauvinistic and Eurocentric way. However, in view of the multi-cultural character of many schools in Western Europe, and of the need to educate young people for life in an interdependent world, most participants at the Lisbon Symposium felt that it is time to take a broader view. It was generally agreed that it is essential that teaching about this topic does not lead to feelings of racial or cultural superiority. When teaching about the Portuguese and other European voyages, care should be taken to do justice to the considerable achievements of the contemporary civilisations in other parts of the world, e.g. Africa, India, China and Japan. Teaching about the voyages could, thus, promote better intercultural understanding.

In this context, the term "Discoveries" itself was challenged, because it could be taken to imply that the rest of the world was a blank before the European voyages of expansion. It was suggested at the Lisbon Symposium that teachers and textbook authors might wish to use such alternative terms as the "Age of Exploration", "European expansion overseas", or the "Age of Encounter".

Teachers in Birmingham in the United Kingdom have been experimenting with the "Age of Encounter" approach, by focusing their class work on how the voyages of exploration led to a meeting of cultures. In this work, an effort has been made to stress the cultural and economic parity which existed between medieval Europe and Africa and Asia. In this, the notion of "Discovery" is confined to discovery of the new sea routes to existing areas of luxury trade and centres of culture which had great historical traditions of their own. The questions, therefore, being asked are: why did the sea-borne routes become important when they did? And why the Portuguese, in particular, pursued them with such single-minded determination?

The United Kingdom has many citizens with either an Afro-Caribbean or a South Asian family history. The work in Birmingham has been developed in part to demonstrate that these individual histories are important and to give them legitimation within the standard syllabus of British History. Those working in this area stress that, to leave both Africa and Asia until they become merely another extension of European history, either through the trans-Atlantic slave trade or through the establishment of imperial control, is to relegate both continents to a historical limbo. They note that Portugal's place in European history is assured and that the contributions made by the epic voyages

The Age of Encounter or Discovery?


Portugal
Africa
India
Muslim Borders, Social and Economic Change, Black Death etc.
Trans-Saharan Gold Trade. (Ghana, Mali, Songhai) Muslim Control.
Mughal Empire
Political and Economic Growth
Gold Trade with Zimbabwe via Sofala, Muslim Control.
Indian Ocean Trading system. Links between China, Malacca, Ormuz, Levant, Egypt, Eastern Mediterranean.
Dynastic Links
Swahili City States e.g. Kilwa.
Technological Innovation, Warfare, Shipbuilding, Cartography, Knowledge of Muslim Trade Routes.
Italian Bankers Monopoly of Eastern Mediterranean Trade
Ability and need to circumvent Italian monopolistic control.
Portuguese Discovery of new sea routes
Consequences of the Encounters.

toward European intellectual and cultural awareness are among the most significant of the Renaissance. What is now needed is for these to be placed in a global context. One possible scheme for meeting this end is outlined in the chart shown on the previous page. It was produced by Peter Rogers, Organiser of the African and Asian Resources Centre at Newman College, Birmingham, and a participant at the Lisbon Symposium.

The need for teaching resources

Teaching about the age of exploration, in general, offers numerous opportunities for visits to museums, including science museums where technological improvements in navigation can be explored. There are also several computer games which teachers might find an interesting way to stimulate learning. These include:

- "The Gold Trade Game", which was originally devised by Kathryn Ross and used in the Newman College materials. It simulates a journey by a North African merchant across the Sahara from Fez to Timbuctu;

- "The Navigators", which is produced by Fitzhenry and Whiteside Ltd, Canada, and introduces pupils to the hazards faced by European seamen during the 16th Century;

- "Geography Search", which is produced by the McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, and simulates an ocean expedition before the New World was fully explored.

Participants at the Lisbon Symposium felt that teachers need a wide range of resources for teaching about the voyages. These should reflect a variety of points of view so that pupils can make their own analysis of this important historical phenomenon,and, thus, gain experience in critical evaluation of different kinds of evidence. In this context, the participants learned with interest of the forthcoming publication of the first volume of "Portugalia Monumenta Africana", which is being produced in co-operation with UNESCO and which contains documents on Portugal and Africa in Portuguese, English and French.

Symposium participants also stressed that teaching about the Voyages should not be reduced to a mere enumeration of various steps and events in the process of expansion. Pupils should be helped to understand the background to, and reasons for, European expansion, and the overall consequences of this phenomenon for Europe and other parts of the world. The intercultural contacts produced by the voyages of exploration sometimes had destructive as well as constructive effects. For example, local institutions and trade patterns in Africa and Asia were disrupted and even destroyed.

Participants at the Lisbon Symposium stressed the need for an interdisciplinary approach to the age of exploration,and the

meeting itself was a model of interdisciplinarity. Although organised for history teachers, it included performances of music from the period and a visit to the Calouste Gulbenkian planetarium, where a special programme on "The Voyage of Vasco da Gama - the Astronomy of 'The Lusiads'" had been created to coincide with the Council of Europe Art Exhibition. The Exhibition itself was a highlight of the Symposium, illustrating how the arts and sciences both contribute to an understanding of history. As one participant noted, "as an object lesson on how to take a theme and communicate it to the general public of all ages, they were outstanding".

The participants left Lisbon with the feeling that the Symposium had provided them with a rare opportunity to discuss, with colleagues from other countries, how to make teaching about the "Discoveries" both exciting and accurate. They also felt that something more tangible should result from their discussions and from the rich collections assembled for the Lisbon Art Exhibition.

They, therefore, urged that:

- primary source material - both European and non-European - should be collated and distributed to teachers in the Council of Europe's member States;

- teaching kits or slide sets should be prepared on various aspects of the Lisbon Exhibition e.g. maps, ships, and examples of intercultural influences in art. They could also feature some of the exhibits from the display of pupils' work.

The participants also recommended that a teachers' workshop should be organised in the near future, within the framework of the Council of Europe's Teacher Bursaries Scheme, to facilitate the preparation of the above-mentioned materials. *)

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*) Such a workshop was held in Evora, Portugal, from 2-6 July 1984 and the report of the workshop is available on request from the School Education Division of the Council of Europe's Secretariat (doc. DECS/EGT (85) 61).

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